

**Course Number:** CSC 305

**Course Title:** Social and Ethical issues in Computing

**Number of Credits:** 1

**Schedule:** One hour of lecture per week.

**Prerequisite:** grade C or better in CSC 210

### **Catalog Description**

Privacy and security. Censorship and freedom of Internet use. Social issues related to cryptography and the use of Internet. Ethical issues in software development.

Legal issues of intellectual property, copyright, public domain software, shareware, patents, licenses, trademarks and trade secrets.

### **Expanded Description**

Introduction to ethical, social and professional issues in the field of computer science.

Philosophical overview of ethics (normative ethics, metaethics, applied ethics).

Philosophical frameworks for ethical decision making.

Identifying and analysis of problems, evaluating ethical arguments and choices.

Privacy and personal data

Ethical basis for privacy protection; legal basis, implications of privacy protection of personal data in large database systems.

Freedom of expression, civil liberties, anonymity, cultural differences

Social implications of computing, democratic values, community values

Use of computers in crime, networks

Computers used in the medical field

Intellectual property rights and protection

Legal perspective, copyright laws, patents, trade secrets, trademarks, plagiarism, piracy  
federal regulations, software protection, public domain, fair use

Professional and ethical responsibilities

Nature and role of the professional, conduct at the workplace, accountability,  
codes of ethics,

## **Course Objectives and Role in Program**

The objectives of this course include:

- To introduce students to the study of ethics
- Show how it applies to the field of computer science.
- Teach methods and tools of analysis to evaluate ethical arguments

## **Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this course students will

- Have knowledge of ethical problems that can occur when accessing personal information
- Become informed of methods to protect private information
- Understand social implications of working in networked environments
- Address intellectual property concerns
- Maintain awareness of professional responsibility, accountability of writing software

## **Method of Evaluation**

Student learning will be evaluated on the basis of

- Grades of in-class quizzes.
- Final paper
- Class participation.

The weight assigned to each element of evaluation will be determined by the instructor of the course on the first day of the class.

## **Required Textbook**

*A Gift of Fire*(2<sup>nd</sup> edition), Sara Baase, Prentice Hall, 2002

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